United Nations DP/CCF/BEN/1/EXTENSION 1

Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund

Distr.: General
17 July 2001
English
Original: French

Second regular session of 2001
10-14 September 2001, New York
Item 5 of the provisional agenda
Country cooperation frameworks and related matters

Extension of the first country cooperation framework with Benin

Note by the Administrator

Period of extension: 1 January 2002 to 31 December 2003

I. Background and justification

A. Historical background

1. The first country cooperation framework (CCF) with Benin was approved by the UNDP Executive Board at its third session of 1997 for the period 1997-2001. In January 1997 the Government had already adopted its country strategy note, which had been drawn up in close collaboration with the United Nations system. The country cooperation framework whose revision is proposed herein focused on two priority areas: the eradication of poverty and the promotion of good governance.

2. Benin's country strategy note sets out the general context and main thrusts of United Nations system assistance to the country for the period 1997-2001. It now serves as the frame of reference for any organization of the United Nations system designing a cooperation programme with Benin. The Government's decision to strengthen its existing consultation and coordination mechanism by drawing up a country strategy note was pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 44/211, 47/199 and 50/120; the country strategy note will henceforth provide a framework for the guidance of United Nations system organizations.

3. The Government's view is that it can use the country strategy note as a tool for creating the conditions under which those organizations can eventually harmonize their programming cycles with the period covered by the strategy note. Some organizations have already formulated cooperation frameworks for their programmes on the basis of the country strategy note, namely UNDP, followed by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund

01-46144 (E) 030801 210801

(UNFPA), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

4. The current UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP programmes will terminate in the year 2003, while UNDP's country cooperation framework will come to an end in 2001. If a second CCF were to be drawn up under these conditions, Benin and UNDP would be establishing programmes that would run until 2006.

5. UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP will be starting to harmonize their cycles in 2004. The Government of Benin, acting on one of the recommendations to emerge from the mid-term review of the country strategy note held in 1999, has therefore requested that its first CCF be extended for two years, from January 2002 to December 2003.

B. Main results of the mid-term review

6. The mid-term review mission documented that the first CCF was focusing on two main intervention areas: the eradication of poverty and the promotion of good governance. In addition, there were activities dealing with environmental protection, gender and development, measures to combat HIV/AIDS, and promotion of communication networks for sustainable human development.

7. The programme approach, adopted by the Government in its country strategy note and the CCF, was used by UNDP as a foundation for capacity-building.

8. Steps were also taken to create partnerships with the United Nations system, the Bretton Woods institutions, bilateral and multilateral partners, non-governmental organizations and organizations of civil society. The outcome was the establishment of a strategic partnership that gained in specificity and strength from two cofinancing agreements signed with the Danish International Development Agency, the parallel financing of activities within the same programme, and support for the formulation of sectoral and general policies.

9. UNDP also endeavoured to promote better coordination within the United Nations system and with the community of development partners. Thus, it had supported the Government's efforts at resource coordination and mobilization in the context of the round-table process and the preparation of the country strategy note. In that regard UNDP played a very active role in planning and organizing the sectoral consultation on job promotion and community development that took place in 1999, and the sectoral consultation on administrative reform held in November 2000.

10. A number of difficulties were encountered. For example, some operational programmes experienced delays in implementation due essentially to the slow formulation of the national programmes from which the support programmes had to be derived.

11. In addition, a succession of unavoidable budget cuts had a negative impact on the cooperation programme. As a result UNDP and the Government were obliged to undertake a number of substantial project and programme revisions so as to refocus activities on the attainment of strategic objectives.

II. Objectives

12. In view of the analysis of the national situation from the sustainable human development perspective and of the lessons from the fifth cycle, the Government chose to focus its cooperation with UNDP during 1997-2001 along two main lines: the eradication of poverty and the promotion of good governance. To this end, UNDP concentrated its efforts on programmes aimed at strengthening institutional and management capacity, revitalizing the private sector, combating HIV/AIDS, and supporting microfinance and community development institutions. Cross-cutting activities were also carried out, for example in the areas of HIV/AIDS, promotion of the network for sustainable human development, environmental management and gender mainstreaming.

13. Following the mid-term review, the Government viewed the reduction of poverty as one of its top priorities. Consequently, it chose the option of pursuing and consolidating poverty-reduction activities. Convinced that UNDP should continue to play its role in the round-table process, the Government suggested that the Programme should again press, with even greater insistence, for the implementation of the conclusions that emerged from the review of the sectoral consultations.

14. In view of the foregoing, the focus from now on will be on activities that can contribute to the implementation of the main recommendations of the mid-term review, in particular those for improving the performance of ongoing operational programmes.

15. From this perspective, all UNDP-supported activities should henceforth fall under the following three programmes: (a) poverty reduction; (b) democratic governance; and (c) new information and communication technologies.

16. It should be noted that Benin has yet to put in place the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). However, a common country assessment was drawn up and completed in 1999. The present extension period will give UNDP the opportunity to work through the United Nations system coordination mechanism so as to accelerate the formulation of UNDAF and bring the current common country assessment into conformity with the current guidelines.

III. Recommendation

17. The Administrator recommends that the Executive Board approve the extension of the first country cooperation framework with Benin for a two-year period, from 1 January 2002 through 31 December 2003.

Annex

Resource mobilization target table for Benin (2002-2003)

Source	Amount (thousands of United States dollars)	Comments
UNDP regular resources		
Estimated carry-over of IPF	(4 317)	Includes carry-over of TRAC 1 and 2 and of resources previously allocated to administrative and operational services.
TRAC 1.1.1	11 501	Assigned immediately to country.
TRAC 1.1.2	0 to 66.7 per cent of TRAC 1.1.1	This range of percentages is presented for initial planning purposes only. The actual assignment will depend on the availability of high-quality programmes. Any increase in the range of percentages would also be subject to availability of resources.
SPPD/STS	1 443	
Subtotal	**17 261**[a]	
Other resources		
Government cost-sharing	–	
Third party cost-sharing	2 500	
UNDP-administered funds, trust funds and other funds		
	of which:	
UNCDF	2 417	
GEF	9 000	
Subtotal	**13 917**	
Grand total	**31 178**[a]	

[a] Not inclusive of TRAC 1.1.2, which is allocated regionally for subsequent country application.
Abbreviations: GEF = Global Environment Facility; IPF = indicative planning figure; SPPD = support for policy and programme development; STS = support for technical services; TRAC = target for resource assignment from the core; UNCDF = United Nations Capital Development Fund.